

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Official Action mailed March 31, 2009. Claims 20 and 21 have been amended herein, claims 2, 4, 8, and 14-18 have been either canceled herein or previously canceled, and claims 22-24 have been added herein. Thus, claims 1, 3, 5-7, 9-13, and 19-24 remain pending in the present case. The following sets forth Applicants' remarks pertaining to the currently pending claims and the outstanding Action.

As an initial matter, Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for noting claims 1, 3, 5-7, 9-13, and 19 as being allowable. Moreover, Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for noting that the subject matter of claims 21 and 22 would be allowable if amended to correct certain improper claim numbering and dependency issues. Applicants have attended to such amendments, in addition to amending the specification and adding certain new claims that are believed to be allowable. This will be discussed more fully below.

In the Action, the Examiner first objected to claims 21 and 22 because claim 20 was inadvertently skipped over in the previous Amendment. Such claims have been renumbered above as claims 20 and 21, respectively, and both such claims have been amended to correct their dependency. In particular, renumbered dependent claim 20 now depends from independent claim 19, while renumbered dependent claim 21 now depends from renumbered dependent claim 20. Applicants respectfully submit that the renumbering and amendment of such claims overcome the claim objections set forth under 37 C.F.R. § 1.126.

Further in the Action, the Examiner objected to the specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. The Examiner suggested that the specification should be amended to recite the language that has been added to the claims in previous amendments, and that such

language appears to have proper support based on the description and figures. Applicants have amended originally presented paragraph [0028] accordingly. Applicants respectfully submit that such specification amendments overcome the specification objections set forth in the Section. Again, as was acknowledged by the Examiner, such amendments do not constitute new matter.

Still further in the Action, the Examiner set forth rejections of independent claim 8 and dependent claims 14-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,113,637 to Gill *et al.* ("*Gill*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,139,550 to Michelson ("*Michelson*"). Essentially, the Examiner asserted that one of ordinary skill in the art would have thought claims 8 and 14-18 as obvious in view of the combination of *Gill* and *Michelson*, and specifically asserted that the structural limitations of such claims were not given patentable weight since they do not effect the actual steps of the method in a manipulative sense. Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner, claims 8 and 14-18 have been canceled above. Thus, the rejections of such claims have been rendered moot. Applicants reserve the right to pursue similar and/or identical claims in one or more continuation and/or divisional applications relating to the present case.

Finally, Applicants note that they have added new claims 22-24 herein. Independent claim 22 essentially combines the subject matter of previously presented independent claim 1 and dependent claims 3, 5, 12, and 13. Given the fact that the Examiner indicated such previously presented claims as being allowable in the Action, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 22 and its dependent claims 23 and 24 are also necessarily allowable. Moreover, Applicants note that such claims are not duplicative of other claims included in the present case given the dependencies of the previously presented

claims. As such, Applicants respectfully request allowance the new claims.

In light of all of the above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of each and every one of the currently pending claims. As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he telephone Applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

Dated: June 10, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

Electronic signature: /Kevin M. Kocun/

Kevin M. Kocun

Registration No.: 54,230

LERNER, DAVID, LITTENBERG,

KRUMHOLZ & MENTLIK, LLP

600 South Avenue West

Westfield, New Jersey 07090

(908) 654-5000

Attorney for Applicants

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